

RECOGNIZING AVIATION CONTRIBUTIONS IN HAITI EARTHQUAKE RELIEF

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Judiciary Committee be discharged from further consideration of S. Con. Res. 61 and the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The clerk will report the concurrent resolution by title.

The bill clerk read as follows:

A concurrent resolution (S. Con. Res. 61) expressing the sense of the Congress that general aviation pilots and industry should be recognized for the contributions made in response to Haiti earthquake relief efforts.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the concurrent resolution.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. I ask unanimous consent that the concurrent resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, the motions to reconsider be laid upon the table, with no intervening action or debate, and any statements relating to the measure be printed in the RECORD.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The concurrent resolution (S. Con. Res. 61) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

The concurrent resolution, with its preamble, reads as follows:

S. CON. RES. 61

Whereas, on January 12, 2010, the country of Haiti suffered a devastating earthquake;

Whereas, after the earthquake, general aviation pilots rallied to provide transportation for medical staff and relief personnel;

Whereas more than 4,500 relief flights were made by general aviators in the first 30 days after the earthquake;

Whereas business aircraft alone conducted more than 700 flights, transporting 3,500 passengers, and over 1,000,000 pounds of cargo and supplies;

Whereas relief flights were fully paid for by individual pilots and aircraft owners;

Whereas smaller general aviation aircraft were able to deliver supplies and medical personnel to areas outside Port-Au-Prince which larger aircraft could not serve; and

Whereas the selfless efforts of the general aviation community have saved countless lives and provided humanitarian assistance in a time of need: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Senate (the House of Representatives concurring), That the United States Congress—

(1) recognizes the many contributions of the general aviation pilots and industry to the Haiti earthquake relief efforts; and

(2) encourages the continued generosity of general aviation pilots and operators in the ongoing humanitarian relief efforts in Haiti.

CONGRATULATING THE NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE ON ITS 75TH ANNIVERSARY

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, I now ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of S. Con. Res. 62, submitted earlier today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the concurrent resolution by title.

The bill clerk read as follows:

A concurrent resolution (S. Con. Res. 62) congratulating the outstanding professional public servants, both past and present, of the Natural Resources Conservation Service on the occasion of its 75th anniversary.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the concurrent resolution.

Mrs. LINCOLN. Mr. President, today the Senate is considering a resolution recognizing the 75th Anniversary of the Natural Resources Conservation Service, known as NRCS.

Congress established the Soil Conservation Service, the predecessor to NRCS, in April of 1935. Since that time, the agency has aided landowners in implementing conservation measures to protect and enhance our Nation's natural resources. Meanwhile, American farmers and ranchers have become the most productive of any on Earth—ensuring a safe, diverse, and nutritious food supply for their fellow citizens and many of the world's citizens.

Today, NRCS administers more than 20 conservation programs that provide technical and financial assistance to landowners. These programs improve soil and water quality, increase energy efficiency, enhance agricultural practices, and retire marginal lands to create and protect wildlife habitat. NRCS has directly contributed to the protection or establishment of 160 million acres of wildlife habitat and to the preservation, restoration, or enhancement of 9 million acres of wetlands.

We have seen real progress over the past 75 years, but I would argue private lands conservation is more important in 2010 than ever before, as we confront challenges such as climate change and loss of open space, and explore opportunities for creating wealth in rural communities through renewable energy production and water quality and carbon credit trading.

Properly managed working lands generate environmental benefits we all enjoy, such as clean air, water made clean by filtering through forests and fields, high-quality soils that capture carbon and make life possible, and wildlife habitat that promotes biodiversity and offers recreational opportunities such as fishing and hunting. With 70 percent of U.S. lands in private hands, the continuation of successful farm bill conservation programs—along with other technical assistance efforts—should be of interest to all of us.

NRCS programs provide important public benefits while working with landowners on a voluntary basis. This unique approach is aided by the agency's presence in every county of every State. Agency employees in every office work toward the common goal of conserving natural resources for the benefit of the landowner and all Americans.

I urge my colleagues to support this important resolution recognizing the NRCS's 75 years of service.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the concurrent resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, the motions to reconsider be laid upon the table, with no intervening action or debate, and any statements relating to the measure be printed in the RECORD.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The concurrent resolution (S. Con. Res. 62) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

The concurrent resolution, with its preamble, reads as follows:

S. CON. RES. 62

Whereas the well-being of the United States is dependent on productive soils along with abundant and high-quality water and related natural resources;

Whereas the Natural Resources Conservation Service (in this resolution referred to as "NRCS") was established as the Soil Conservation Service in the Department of Agriculture in 1935 to assist farmers, ranchers, and other landowners in protecting soil and water resources on private lands;

Whereas Hugh Hammond Bennett, the first Chief of the Soil Conservation Service and the "father of soil conservation", led the creation of the modern soil conservation movement that established soil and water conservation as a national priority;

Whereas the NRCS, with the assistance of President Franklin D. Roosevelt, State governments, and local partners, developed a new mechanism of American conservation service delivery, which brings together private individuals with Federal, State, and local governments to achieve common conservation objectives;

Whereas the NRCS provides a vital public service by supplying technical expertise and financial assistance to cooperating private landowners for the conservation of soil and water resources;

Whereas the NRCS, as authorized by Congress, has developed and provided land conservation programs that have resulted in the restoration and preservation of millions of acres of wetlands, forests, and grasslands that provide innumerable benefits to the general public in the form of recreational opportunities, wildlife habitat, water quality, and reduced soil erosion;

Whereas the NRCS is the world leader in soil science and soil surveying;

Whereas the NRCS is the national leader in the inventory of natural resources on private lands, providing national leaders and the public with the status and trends related to these resources and helping forecast the availability of critical water supplies;

Whereas the NRCS has helped communities develop and implement thousands of locally led projects that continue to provide flood control, soil conservation, water supply, and recreational benefits to all Americans, while providing business and job creation opportunities as well;

Whereas, since its establishment, the NRCS has developed, tested, and demonstrated conservation practices, helped develop the science and art of conservation, and continues to strive toward innovation;

Whereas the NRCS encourages and works with landowners and land users to adopt conservation practices and technologies in a voluntary manner to address natural resource concerns;

Whereas NRCS employees serve in offices in every State and territory, while other employees assist other countries and governments;